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APPLICATION NO.	FILING DATE	FIRST NAMED INVENTOR	ATTORNEY DOCKET NO.	CONFIRMATION NO.
09/385,014	08/27/1999	NAOHARU SHINOZAKI	P8075-9014	8603

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[REDACTED] EXAMINER

LE, DINH THANH

ART UNIT	PAPER NUMBER
2816	

DATE MAILED: 12/04/2001

Please find below and/or attached an Office communication concerning this application or proceeding.

Office Action Summary

Application No.
09/385,014

Applicant(s)

SHINOZAKI

Examiner

DINH LE

Art Unit

2861



-- The MAILING DATE of this communication appears on the cover sheet with the correspondence address --

Period for Reply

A SHORTENED STATUTORY PERIOD FOR REPLY IS SET TO EXPIRE 3 MONTH(S) FROM THE MAILING DATE OF THIS COMMUNICATION.

- Extensions of time may be available under the provisions of 37 CFR 1.136 (a). In no event, however, may a reply be timely filed after SIX (6) MONTHS from the mailing date of this communication.
- If the period for reply specified above is less than thirty (30) days, a reply within the statutory minimum of thirty (30) days will be considered timely.
- If NO period for reply is specified above, the maximum statutory period will apply and will expire SIX (6) MONTHS from the mailing date of this communication.
- Failure to reply within the set or extended period for reply will, by statute, cause the application to become ABANDONED (35 U.S.C. § 133).
- Any reply received by the Office later than three months after the mailing date of this communication, even if timely filed, may reduce any earned patent term adjustment. See 37 CFR 1.704(b).

Status

- 1) Responsive to communication(s) filed on Sep 26, 2001
- 2a) This action is FINAL. 2b) This action is non-final.
- 3) Since this application is in condition for allowance except for formal matters, prosecution as to the merits is closed in accordance with the practice under *Ex parte Quayle*, 1935 C.D. 11; 453 O.G. 213.

Disposition of Claims

- 4) Claim(s) 1-20 is/are pending in the application.
- 4a) Of the above, claim(s) _____ is/are withdrawn from consideration.
- 5) Claim(s) 6-20 is/are allowed.
- 6) Claim(s) 1-5 is/are rejected.
- 7) Claim(s) _____ is/are objected to.
- 8) Claims _____ are subject to restriction and/or election requirement.

Application Papers

- 9) The specification is objected to by the Examiner.
- 10) The drawing(s) filed on _____ is/are objected to by the Examiner.
- 11) The proposed drawing correction filed on _____ is: a) approved b) disapproved.
- 12) The oath or declaration is objected to by the Examiner.

Priority under 35 U.S.C. § 119

- 13) Acknowledgement is made of a claim for foreign priority under 35 U.S.C. § 119(a)-(d).

a) All b) Some* c) None of:

1. Certified copies of the priority documents have been received.
2. Certified copies of the priority documents have been received in Application No. _____.
3. Copies of the certified copies of the priority documents have been received in this National Stage application from the International Bureau (PCT Rule 17.2(a)).

*See the attached detailed Office action for a list of the certified copies not received.

- 14) Acknowledgement is made of a claim for domestic priority under 35 U.S.C. § 119(e).

Attachment(s)

- 15) Notice of References Cited (PTO-892) 18) Interview Summary (PTO-413) Paper No(s). _____
- 16) Notice of Draftsperson's Patent Drawing Review (PTO-948) 19) Notice of Informal Patent Application (PTO-152)
- 17) Information Disclosure Statement(s) (PTO-1449) Paper No(s). _____ 20) Other: _____

Art Unit: 2816

FINAL REJECTION

Claim Rejections - 35 U.S.C. § 102

The following is a quotation of the appropriate paragraphs of 35 U.S.C. 102 that form the basis for the rejections under this section made in this Office action:

A person shall be entitled to a patent unless --

(e) the invention was described in a patent granted on an application for patent by another filed in the United States before the invention thereof by the applicant for patent, or on an international application by another who has fulfilled the requirements of paragraphs (1), (2), and (4) of section 371© of this title before the invention thereof by the applicant for patent.

Claim 1 is rejected under 35 U.S.C. 102 (e) as being anticipated by Monohar et al. (US Pat. 5,963,053).

Figure 1 of Manohar et al discloses a comparator comprising a differential circuit (26, 28), and a current generating circuit (29).

Claim Rejections - 35 U.S.C. § 103

The following is a quotation of 35 U.S.C. 103(a) which forms the basis for all obviousness rejections set forth in this Office action:

(a) A patent may not be obtained though the invention is not identically disclosed or described as set forth in section 102 of this title, if the differences between the subject matter sought to be patented and the prior art are such that the subject matter as a whole would have been obvious at the time the invention was made to a person having ordinary skill in the art to which said subject matter pertains. Patentability shall not be negated by the manner in which the invention was made.

Art Unit: 2816

Claims 2-5 are rejected under 35 U.S.C. 103 (a) under 35 U.S.C. 103 (a) as being unpatentable over Manohar et al. (US Pat. 5,963,053) in view of Fernander et al. (US Pat. 5,448,200) and Harris et al. (US Pat. 5,475,323).

Figure 1 of Manohar et al discloses a comparator circuit as discussed above but does not disclose a delay time or a fixed current source. Figure 5 of Fernander et al teaches a comparator (3) including the delay means (43) for adjusting the delay time of the feedback signal. Figure 25 teaches a comparator circuit having a fixed current source (904) and a variable current source (906) for easily trimming the source current. It would have been obvious at the time the invention was made to apply the delay means taught by Fernander et al and the fixed current source taught by Harris et al in the circuit of Manohar et al for the purpose of adjusting the delay time of the feedback signal and easily trimming the source current. Note that adjusting the delay time for accommodating with the requirement of a particular environment is a common practice and is considered to be a matter of a design expedient for an engineer. Also, the current source transistor (29) of Manohar et al can be connected to a high voltage source or ground depending upon the transistor types used.

Response to Applicant's Arguments

The applicant argues that Manohar fails to disclose a current regulating circuit for increasing and decreasing an amount of current flowing through a differential circuit. The

Art Unit: 2816

argument is not persuasive because the transistor (29) in Figure 1 of Manohar is the current regulating circuit which is connected to the differential circuit (26, 28) to regulate an amount current through the transistors (26, 28) responsive to the internal signal . The transistor (29) functions as a variable current source because its gate is controlled by any change in the voltage at the junction between the transistor (22), the common current flowing to the transistors (26, 28) would increase/decrease responsive to the different input voltage (VIN, VREF). The transistor (29) is not a constant current source.

Allowable Subject Matter

Claims 6-20 would be allowable.

The claims would be allowable because the prior art references do not disclose a plurality of complementary signal generating circuits and processing circuits, a seventh transistor, an eighth transistor, and a second inverter.

Conclusion

THIS ACTION IS MADE FINAL. Applicant is reminded of the extension of time policy as set forth in 37 CFR 1.136(a).

Art Unit: 2816

A shortened statutory period for reply to this final action is set to expire THREE MONTHS from the mailing date of this action. In the event a first reply is filed within TWO MONTHS of the mailing date of this final action and the advisory action is not mailed until after the end of the THREE-MONTH shortened statutory period, then the shortened statutory period will expire on the date the advisory action is mailed, and any extension fee pursuant to 37 CFR 1.136(a) will be calculated from the mailing date of the advisory action. In no event, however, will the statutory period for reply expire later than SIX MONTHS from the mailing date of this final action.

Any inquiry concerning this communication or earlier communications from the examiner should be directed to Examiner Din. Led whose telephone number is (703) 305-3790. The examiner can normally be reached on Monday to Friday from 7:00 A.M. to 5:00 P.M..

If attempts to reach the examiner by telephone are unsuccessful, the examiner's supervisor, Tim Callahan, can be reached on (703) 308-4876 or E-mail: Timmony. Callahan@USPTO.gov. The fax phone number for this Group is (703) 308-7725.

Any inquiry of a general nature or relating to the status of this application or proceeding should be directed to the Group receptionist whose telephone number is (703) 308-0956.


DINH LE
Primary Examiner

November 28,